

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TUNIS 07382 201712Z

43

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 USIE-00 SSO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 INRE-00 NEAE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 NSCE-00 PRS-01

/041 W

----- 010689

O 201525Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4636

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 7382

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: OEXC OVIP PFOR TS

SUBJECT: VISIT OF TAHAR OELKHODJA, GOT MINISTER OF INTERIOR

REF: TUNIS 7092

1. ABDELKRIM MOUSSA, DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS AT INTERIOR MINISTRY, CALLED EMBASSY POLITICAL OFFICER SAYING THAT WHILE ARRANGEMENTS THROUGH USIS FOR MINISTER BELKHODJA'S VISIT WERE PROCEEDING WELL, H ALSO WISHED TO DISCUSS SEPARATELY MORE POLITICAL ASPECTS OF TRIP. MOUSSA LEFT IMPLICATION THAT HE WAS SPEAKING UNDER SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FROM BEOKHODJA.

2. FIRST POINT WAS THAT BELKHODJA REMAINED ANXIOUS TO MEET "EVEN IF FOR ONLY FIFTEEN MINUTES OR LESS" WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER DURING FORTHCOMING VI IT. SECOND WAS THAT MINISTR ALSO HOPED TO HAVE OPPORTUNITY OF "BEING INTRODUCED TO PRESIDENT FORD AND TO

GOVERNOR CARTER AT ANY PLACE OR TIME." MOUSSA CONTINUED

SAYING THAT "TIMES WERE CHANGING IN TUNISIA" AND THAT SUCH PUBLIC EXPOSURE AND PHOTOGRAPHS WOULD BE USEFUL AT THIS TIME.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TUNIS 07382 201712Z

3. EMBOFF REPLIES THAT EMBASSY HAD ALREADY REPORTED

MINISTER'S DESIRE TO MEET WITH SECRETARY BUT THAT IN VIEW OF SECRETARY'S HEAVY SCHEDULE MEETING MIGHT BE DIFFICULT TO ARRANGE. AS TO MEETINGS WITH PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES, EMBOFF VENTURED THAT THESE WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO SET UP DURING FINAL WEEK OF CAMPAIGN. EMBOFF AGREED TO FORWARD MINISTER'S DESIRES TO DEPARTMENT AND TO INFORM MOUSSA IN RESPONSE RECEIVED BEFORE MINISTER'S OCTOBER 26 DEPARTURE.

4. COMMENT: BALKHODJA IS KEENLY INTERESTED IN THIS TRIP, AND HE EES VISIBILITY OF HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS OF IMMEDIATE POLITICAL IMPORTANCE IN TUNISIA. ASIDE FROM DEMONSTRATION OF CLOSE U.S.-TUNISIAN RELATIONS WHICH SUCH MEETINGS IMPLY, BELKHODJA ALSO CLEARLY BELIEVES VISIT PROVIDES OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN HIS OWN POLITICAL POSITION.

WHILE THIS IS NOT UNUSUAL FOR A POLITICAL ANIMAL LIKE BELKHODJA, IT COMES AT A TIME WHEN OTHER MEMBERS OF ESTABLISHMENT ARE ALSO LOOKING AROUND TO GAUGE RESPECTIVE STRENGTH OF PRINCIPAL PLAYERS.

5. THERE IS INCREASING SPECULATION THAT BELKHODJA HAS GOOD CHANCES FOR PRIME MINISTERSHIP IN EVENT NOUIRA SHOULD SUCCEED TO PRESIDENCY, AND HE OBVIOUSLY BELIEVES MEETINGS OF EVEN BRIEFEST DURATION WITH HIGH-LEVEL AMERICANS WILL STRENGTHEN FURTHER THE ALREADY GOOD HAND HE IS HOLDING. EMBASSY WILL LEAVE TO DEPARTMENT'S

JUDGMENT HOW HARD TO PUSH FOR REQUESTED ENCOUNTERS.
KING

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ITINERARY, MINISTERIAL VISITS, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 OCT 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TUNIS07382
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760393-0991
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761031/aaaabaos.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 TUNIS 7092
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 JUN 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <22 JUN 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISIT OF TAHAR OELKHODJA, GOT MINISTER OF INTERIOR
TAGS: OEXC, OVIP, PFOR, TS, US, (OELKHODJA, TAHAR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006